

TOM FOOLERY!

A FAMOUS AUSSIE SWASHBUCKLER IS ABOUT TO GET A NEW LEASE OF LIFE. ACTOR, THOMAS COCQUEREL TELLS MATT MYERS WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE... IN LIKE FLYNN!

DNA: How does one go about playing a Hollywood legend like Errol Flynn?

Thomas Cocquerel: Well... I first heard about Errol Flynn as a kid. I went to the same high school (Sydney Church Of England Grammar), which I think was the last school he was expelled from. He'd been expelled from many schools! He was also the only actor to come out of that particular school and, because I wanted to be an actor, too, I was fascinated by him. In drama school, I always had in the back of my mind, that I'd like to play him one day. So when the script finally came around, I thought it was too good to be true. It was still hard to get that role, but it was pretty amazing that I got it! I watched his movies and read his book (*My Wicked, Wicked Ways*) to understand the person he was. The film is about the young Flynn, so I got to delve into who he was before he became the Flynn we knew on screen.

What was the most surprising thing you discovered about Errol Flynn?

He came across as confident and together, but when you look at someone like him in their youth, you see what makes them become so interesting. He had a rough relationship with his mother and father because he was back and forth at private boys' schools in Australian and the UK. He really missed his parents.

Flynn's sex-ploits were legendary. Does the character and story live up to the film's title?

Absolutely! It's full of adventure, to say the least. It's a true story based on one of his sailing exploits in search of gold. After high school he was struggling to make money and heard of the gold rush in Papua New Guinea. He convinced a few friends to sail with him up the coast of Australia. They travelled to a lot of coastal towns and he met a lot of characters along the way, many of them beings girls!

The movie only covers his early years.

Would you be interested in playing him again in a follow-up movie?

I would love to! I felt very sad when it all finished. I thought, "Bugger! That may be the only chance I had to play him!" I've been fascinated by him for so long. I'd really love to play him again.

What sort of physical training did you do for the role?

There was actually a lot more than I was prepared for. The film has a big boxing scene and a fair bit of fighting, so I had to train for that, including all the choreography. I also got the role pretty close to filming, so there wasn't a lot of time.

What do you normally do to keep fit?

I surf, go to the gym, and I like hiking and running.



TOM ON HUGH

DNA: Who has been the biggest influence, career wise?

Tom: I grew up around the corner from where Hugh Jackman grew up. Knowing he was from the same area and has achieved what he has, inspired me. As a kid wanting to be an actor, it felt out of reach, but he made things seem feasible. That's always stayed with me.

Is he who you'd turn gay for?

He would definitely be the one!

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PORTRAITS OF THE LEGEND

Flynn in famous roles from *Robin Hood* and *Dodge City*.

I enjoy Australia's beautiful beaches.

This is our Wedding Issue and, of course, same-sex marriage is legal in Australia now. Do you have friends or family who were affected by last year's debate?

Yes. It was hard to watch, and sad that, as a country, we were so far behind. It took way too long. My closest mate is gay, and he struggled coming out. Now, to know that he is finally free to be himself and has the same rights as everyone else is a beautiful thing. We did Mardi Gras together last year and, man, can that boy dance! It's great to see him now, more confident in a country moving in the right direction.

Tell us about your other up-coming movie, the remake of the '80s Billionaire Boys Club.

It's about these kids in 1986 who, in college, come up with this Ponzi scheme to make money. But their trust in a con man suddenly unravels and turns sour. It's like a younger *Wolf Of Wall Street*. It's a very cool movie with an incredible cast and those '80s shoulder-pad suits made it quite fun. I also did an independent film in Queensland called *Celeste*, with Radha Mitchell. It's about a boy and his step mum. He leaves home when his father dies and 10 years later he's on the wrong side of the tracks with people after him. He goes home to hide and, in doing so, renews his relationship with his stepmother. It's a beautiful movie.

What's been the biggest pinch-yourself moment in your career so far?

About four years ago I worked with Anthony Hopkins on my first ever feature, *Kidnapping Mr Heineken*. In the movie we kidnap his character and I take care of him in a cell. There was a day with just the two of us on set. It was magic. We also had time off-set between scenes and he's a lovely man. He took me under his wing and taught me a lot. It was so cool. I'll never beat that experience.

Have you ever had an on-stage wardrobe malfunction?

In high school we did a play where I was a woman and my husband had to pull on my hair, but he pulled my wig right off. I was mortified that we couldn't get it back on. I had to finish the rest of the play wigless. I was in heels and dress but I just didn't feel like a woman at all!

Who is your music diva?

I absolutely love Adele. She's unbelievable, especially the way she turns her heartbreak into some amazing recordings. My favourite would be *Rolling In The Deep*.

Are you a briefs, boxers or freeballing guy?

I'm a boxer-briefs man, for comfort.

What about the young swashbuckling Errol? A freeballer?

I didn't go into that much detail about him, but I'd imagine he probably was. He didn't have time for underwear - not with all those windows he was jumping out of!

MORE: *In Like Flynn* will be released later in the year.